

Nine Mile Thru Trail *by Tom Sidar* **Long Cove to Schoodic Beach**

Long Pond Stream runs north from the outlet of Long Pond in the town of Sullivan. Bounded by steep, hard granite ledges on the east, clear water runs in sparkling riffles and drops over miniature falls forming small pools and eddies that flow over fallen leaves and broken birch. Further along, the water slows and runs through dream-like, mossy banks of cedar swamp with deer tracks imprinted along the stream bank.

December 30, 2011. Phillip Dunbar and I are walking north on Long Pond Brook. This is Dunbar land, hundreds of acres of it, passed through the generations. Phillip knows this land well. He tells me that, as a boy, he would hunt and fish these waters and woods until daylight faded.

I am here for Frenchman Bay Conservancy. We are interested in purchasing a portion of this land as a link in a hiking trail that would be open to the public from Old Route One at Long Cove in Sullivan all the way to the State of Maine Reserve Land on the summit of Schoodic Mountain. From there, hiking trails running north on Maine's Donnell Pond Reserve Land connect the summits of Black, Caribou, Catherine and Tunk Mountains.



PHOTO ROB BROOKS

This aerial photo shows the whole landscape of Long Pond to Schoodic and north.

The vision of this thru trail that once seemed dreamy is starting to come into focus.

Over the past eight years, thanks to the generosity of Land For Maine's Future, our members and friends, FBC has acquired the Schoodic Bog Preserve with two adjacent parcels, the Long Ledges Preserve and two easements with hiking trails that the donors have generously opened to the public—Tucker Mountain and Baker Hill. With the addition of the Dunbar parcel, there will be 794 acres of FBC conservation lands directly south of the State's Donnell Pond Reserve. The vision of this thru trail that once seemed dreamy is starting to come into focus.

As Phillip and I walk along, he quietly disappears from time to time

and I am left to my own meandering thoughts. "There are miles and miles of habitat for wildlife like partridge, deer, snowshoe hare, brook trout, wood frogs and warblers...what a



Phil Dunbar indicates the old faded red boundary line.

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facebook.com/frenchmanbay

continued on page 3

President's Column

a message from our president, Iris Simon

As I look ahead to all the summer activities Frenchman Bay Conservancy has planned, I realize how our programs and properties have grown since I came on as a director.

Monday Music at Tidal Falls entertains more and more families and their guests. They bring picnics and take advantage of the food cart serving the best lobster rolls and hot dogs.

I suggest you make reservations early for our 4th annual Lobsters at Tidal Falls, seating is limited. Herbie Hodgkins will, once again, cook the lobsters to perfection.

As our properties grow our stewardship needs also grow. This summer work will continue on many of our favorite trails and begin on some new ones thanks to the help of many volunteers who are the key to the success of our small organization.

There is nothing like getting out on the land and enjoying it while making an important contribution to conservation.

We need volunteers to build and maintain hiking trails, monitor properties under the guidance of a staff member, and assist with events. **An easement monitoring training session takes place Thursday, June 27 at 4 o'clock.** Please call the office or consult the website for more details.

To find out more about volunteering and get on our list, please email me at simon.lamoine@gmail.com. I send out notices as volunteer needs arise.

I look forward to seeing you this summer on our lands or at some of our programs. ❖



It's easy to overlook wild red trillium because the bloom nods toward the ground, obscuring the brilliant hue. *Trillium erectum* is commonly called wake-robin because the plant blooms around the time migrating robins return in spring.



Common Violets

by Tom Sidar

If you aren't looking, it's easy to walk by the earliest wildflowers of Downeast Maine and not even notice them. While I was walking along an old woods road by Schoodic Bog, I looked down to my side at just the right moment. There, a few small, green and vibrant purple islands of wild violets contrasted with the surrounding brown leaf litter like spring to winter. I set my camera lens to macro and lay flat on the ground attempting to capture the subtle spirit of this dense old colony of common blue violets.

Judging by the size and density of these patch colonies, they have likely grown from seeds distributed by ants. Near the top of the violet's root, after the flowers have faded (so early that they are not always pollinated) small seeds with a sugary, oily protuberance attached, attract "farming" ants. The ants haul the food with seed to their ant hill nest. When the good parts are eaten, ants carry the hard seed into tunnels farther from the nest where they have just the soil cover and nutrients they need to grow.

Their name suggests that these beautiful wild violets are common, but after a long Maine winter, they seemed anything but common to me. I learned that violets have played a long symbolic role in history. Just one example from *The Secrets of Wildflowers* by Jack Sanders: "After Napoleon was banished to Elba, he declared: 'I shall return with the violets in spring.' The flower became the symbol of his followers who called him Caporal Violette or Le Père Violet." ❖



Bob and Jack on top of Schoodic Mountain. Schoodic Bog and Cadillac Mountain are in the background.

Nine Mile continued from page 1

great hiking trail this would be, with maybe some bog bridges here or over there...what do we need to do to move this deal along?... (ticking off on my fingers) surveys, appraisals, purchase and sale agreements...oh, look at the pileated woodpecker hole up there..." This is the paradox of a career in land conservation.

"Hey!", Phillip calls.

"Yeah!" I cannot see him through the thick brush.

When I catch up to him, he points. "See this? This is my father's blazed property line." I look where he points and I see very faint red boundary paint on an old tree. We follow the boundary. Some of the trees are so old that they lay rotting on the forest floor. This is the way a very old Downeast Maine boundary line looks.

Months pass. FBC committees meet, the Dunbar family talks, field work and surveys are completed. Finally we reach an agreement. On February 28, 2013, the owners Philip Dunbar, Elaine Dunbar, and Betsy and Roger Wakefield, sign the deed for 65 acres to FBC. Iris Simon, the FBC board president, signs, and the transfer is complete.

A month later, I get the idea to hike and bushwhack from Long Cove, up Tucker Mountain, on to Schoodic Mountain and then down to Schoodic Beach—walking the "Thru Trail" vision from Route One to Schoodic Mountain. On April 18, Bob DeForrest from Maine Coast Heritage Trust, my son, Jack and I start out. The day is cold and cloudy. They "run" up Tucker Mountain. I go slowly stopping as my heart and

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Nine Mile continued from page 3

breathing get into sync. As the day goes on, we work our way north. The terrain varies from steep climbing over, around and between rocks to mossy green downhills and huckleberry ledges. The landscape is always natural and always interesting,

We follow the stream to where the trail would head east towards Schoodic Bog. Ahead of us, a ruffed grouse ("partridge" in Maine vernacular) fans its tail feathers out in a spectacular show. I try to get some photos with little to show for it. We cross east

We bushwhack for a while and soon we are on Frenchman Bay Conservancy's new 65-acre addition to our Long Ledges Preserve.

even in mud season. We pick our way through to Long Pond and have lunch on the rocks.

We bushwhack for a while and soon we are on FBC's new 65-acre addition to our Long Ledges Preserve.

to the FBC Schoodic Bog Preserve, and we walk the well marked western boundary, occasionally cutting in east to find the dramatic ridge views of the bog in the foreground of Schoodic Mountain. This trail

will take a lot of work, but it will be worth it.

We come out of the woods onto Schoodic Bog Road and then down Tamarack Lane, across the Down East Sunrise Trail, up "Jeep trail" to the summit of Schoodic Mountain. Looking out the compass points of the summit view, the definition of "landscape level conservation" is clear. To the northeast, we view the summits of Black, Catherine, and Tunk Mountains and to the south, the ridge lines of the Acadia Mountains. From the summit it is a downhill romp on the trail to Schoodic Beach on Donnell Pond, but it is way too cold for a swim this day. For the camera, I stand with my hiking boots a few inches under the crystal clear water of Donnell Pond. When we reach the parking lot, a Boy Scout troop from Topsham is headed out

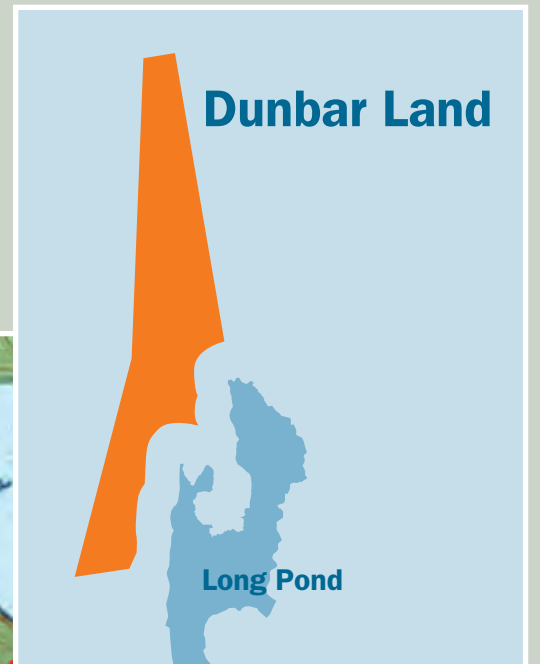


PHOTO ROB BROOKS

with heavy overnight back packs. The scout leader asks us to take a group photo. These are the first people we've seen since Route One. It seems right somehow. Maybe these scouts will come back years later when the "Thru Trail" is more than just a vision. We wish the scouts well and they hike off on their adventure. I check the odometer on my GPS. It reads exactly 9.00 miles from our beginning at the Department of Transportation turn-out at Route One to the Department of Conservation Schoodic Beach Parking Area. For now anyway, this is Nine Mile Thru Trail. ❖

Nine Mile Thru Trail

The Nine Mile Thru Trail project with FBC conserved lands, State of Maine lands and the old "Jeep trail" marked with a red line. The route is not yet complete.



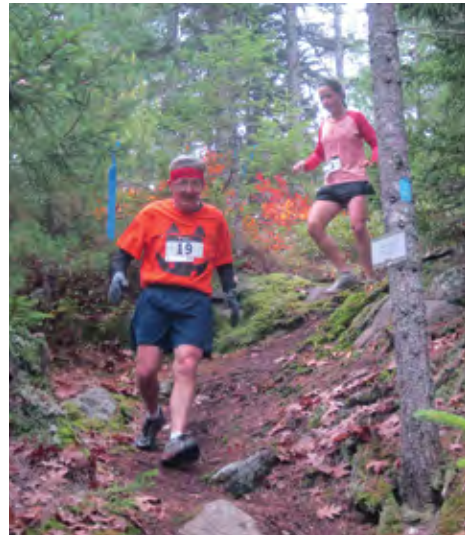
New 65 acre addition to FBC's Long Ledges Preserve



FBC Events

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will take place at Moore Auditorium, at the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) on Wednesday, July 10 at 7:00 p.m. After general business the topic will be new plans for the former Modena lands. Please join us! Visit the FBC website or FaceBook closer to the date for more information.



Downeast Double Trouble Trail Race Challenge

Sundays October 27 and November 3, 2013

Join Frenchman Bay Conservancy and Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust for two trail races this fall in Orland and Sullivan. Get more information and pre-register on our website. Event sponsors: Evergreen Home & Hearth, Mandala Farms, Peacock Builders, Sumner High School Athletic Boosters



LOGO BY LAURA LYONS

Ellsworth High School student Laura Lyon won the logo design contest.



Monday Music at Tidal Falls

All concerts are 6:30-8:00 p.m. and to FBC on FaceBook for up to the minute cancellation information at www.facebook.com/frenchmanbay. There are no rain dates for performances (sorry). If the weather is questionable, stay tuned

Delicious Dogs food cart will be on the premises again, selling hot dogs, lobster rolls, slices of pie, and more.

- June 17** Flash! in the Pans (7:30–9:00 p.m.) *SPECIAL CONCERT*
- July 8** U-Maine Machias Ukulele Club
- July 15** Shades of Blue
- July 22** Impartial Crowd
- July 29** Jazz Time 99
- Aug 5** Alice French & Frank Fredenburg
- Aug 12** Audrey Ryan
- Aug 19** Fletcher's Landing Philharmonic Orchestra

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Join us TODAY!

And receive a FREE static cling decal to show you're a proud member.

Your membership and donations help us protect and preserve the character of this very special place—and we welcome donations at all levels. Members receive a free decal, two editions per year of our newsletter, and the opportunity to be involved by helping out with trail maintenance, easement monitoring, or mailings.

BLUE HERON SOCIETY

If possible, we urge you to consider joining the Blue Heron Society by making a commitment to give \$1000 or more each year for general operating support. You can also support Frenchman Bay Conservancy through a bequest. Remember us in your will or explore other estate planning options with your lawyer.



SCAN THIS CODE

and join Frenchman Bay Conservancy from your smart phone with a credit card.

YES! I want to join Frenchman Bay Conservancy.

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Please enroll me in the category checked below.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 |
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Please remit form and check to: Frenchman Bay Conservancy
PO Box 150, Hancock, Maine 04640

To pay by credit card, visit our website www.frenchmanbay.org

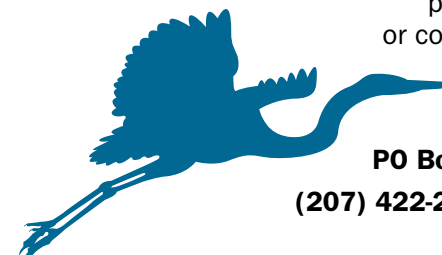
Frenchman Bay Conservancy is recognized as a nonprofit 501c(3) charitable organization. All gifts are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Thank you!

Frenchman Bay Conservancy

Frenchman Bay Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust founded in 1987. Our mission is to build lasting relationships and commitments that conserve the distinctive landscapes and natural resources of the Frenchman Bay and Union River watersheds.

For more information on the Conservancy, please visit our office at Tidal Falls, or contact us by mail, phone, or e-mail:



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www.frenchmanbay.org

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LOBSTER at Tidal Falls Saturday, July 20, 2013 Serving 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Rain or Shine

If you didn't receive an invitation, contact the office, 422-2328. Reserve early, pre-paid reservations only. FBC will provide picnic tables and tent. BYOB.

Lobsters by Herbie



We are grateful to our friends at Acadia Trust for helping us sponsor this event.

